

THE Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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IN another column we publish a letter from an "Anxious Inquirer," whose mind has been considerably agitated and disturbed by the perusal of a recently published tract wherein the unsubstantial basis of the so-called "Word of God" is incidentally alluded to. The proverb that the "agitation of thought is the beginning of wisdom," is particularly exemplified in this class of cases. Persons brought up from childhood in a blind unquestioning faith in the Bible as the especial revelation of God to man, are usually so surrounded by others holding, or professing the same view, and imbued with the idea of the superiority of religious faith to carnal reason, that they fail to examine, or even suspect the unsoundness of the foundation upon which their faith is built. It is only when some clear bold statement of fact reaches their eyes or ears that doubts arise, and the agitation of thought begins which invariably leads to a realisation of the unsoundness of the theological structure which they have so long reposed in.

The statements made in the tract referred to are—
"1st, We have no positively correct version of what Jesus said or did; 2nd, That probably the earliest written books of the New Testament were Paul's epistles, yet the strictly orthodox Dr. Lardner says, the first of these was not written earlier than A.D. 52, and the Gospels several years later; and a further statement, endorsed by the Rev. H. N. Wollaston, that there is not in existence a single manuscript, or portion of one, which is an original; also, that none of the copies, or copies of copies now in existence were written prior to the 4th century." Our correspondent earnestly asks us to inform her whether the above statements are true, and if we pronounce them such on what authority are they based? We answer in the affirmative. All the evidence we have met with in the course of our researches is confirmatory of

the fact, and we will cite orthodox authority in support of it. The Rev. H. N. Wollaston, already alluded to, is the incumbent of Trinity Church of England, East Melbourne, who had the courage to write the truth on this important subject in an article bearing his signature, which appeared in the "Melbourne Review," for April last. To the surprise of many he has not been publicly called to account by the Church authorities, but in this they have exercised discretion, as a ventilation of the subject would have opened the eyes of so many of the flock, and caused a general commotion in the fold. The Rev. Dr. Davidson, L L D, &c., in his "Biblical Criticism," vol. II. p. 12, says—"The autographs of the New Testament have perished irrevocably. What material the writers of the present MSS. made use of can only be conjectured." He says, moreover, that there are no traces of the existence of the autographs in early history—no contemporaneous historians referring to them in any way. This rather remarkable fact has not been sufficiently noticed by other writers. That the various manuscripts which are now extant were not copied from one original is manifest from their wide diversity. Jerome says—"There are as many different Bibles as copies of the Bible; for every man has added to or subtracted from, according to his own caprice, as he saw fit." We would also remind our correspondent, and others in a similar state of mind, that the various councils held during the dark ages to settle the Canon were under the auspices of the Catholic Church, and the members bigoted and turbulent. Constantine made short work of it by turning out three-fourths of the most violent, and it is highly probable that fear or imbecility kept the remainder quiescent. Indeed, all the evidence we have of the divinity or credibility of the Bible is drawn from the Catholic Church, a Church which the Protestant sects look upon with great suspicion, and whose leaders generally in old times, and largely in the present, consider it lawful [and commendable to lie and deceive for the sake of their religion.

The Bible, as we have often said, is an excellent book in its way, containing much that is good, and still more that is worthless; but to get to the former it is necessary to exercise reason and common sense as we should in the perusal of any other volume. When, however, it

is presented to us as a special revelation from God, we must either accept the proposition in blind faith, or by the alternative of investigation readily see how baseless is the assumption. A candid enquiry inevitably leading to this result.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM A LATE RESPECTED PREACHER.

(Continued.)

THE following additional communications from Jas. Martin will be read with considerable interest, as affording a clue to the principle on which such explanations of experience in the spirit world sphere are to be understood. It seems quite clear that to those of us who are still encompassed by the grosser materialism of the earth life, a full comprehension of the objective scenery and the inner life of the higher state is next to impossible. An idea may be formed of these facts, but there is certainly no room for dogmatism. While on the other hand, it is equally clear that conceptions may be formed of a subjective character, and such as will greatly improve the moral tone of earth life, and render it brighter and more effective of good results in the anticipation of higher attainments and fuller experiences in the life to come. There is one thing in particular to which we could call attention, that is, the basis on which friendships are formed in the other life; a basis from which there can arise none of those misunderstandings which so plentifully abound here; but from which will spring intercourse at once soul-satisfying and conducive of spiritual growth; while by the union thus formed, strength will be imparted to carry out more effectively the intentions which arise from a wise conception of the duties to which man, as the intelligent agent of the Infinite Spirit Father, is called. In the next issue of this paper, the present series of these communications will be concluded, to be resumed in due time, we trust, for the edification of the rather limited circle which takes an interest in such matters; but why should not all do so when every individual on the face of the earth is a traveller to that bourne, and should make it his business to acquire as much information concerning it in all its relations as would favourably affect him now.

Can you give me any account of your experience, gathered as you passed away from the earth life, to that state in which you now exist?

To enter into such an experience as you refer to in your question, would be easy enough to me were it possible to convey in adequate language the circumstances by which that experience was gained. Absolutely ignorant of the vast change which takes place when the soul passes from one stage of its existence to another, as those must be who still dwell on the earth, it is next to impossible to convey any adequate illustration, even to them, of the experience connected with it. It is, indeed, one of those phases of conscious life, which can alone be known to those who pass through it themselves. However, at your request I will do what I can to assist you in forming an approximate idea of what I realised, from the moment I closed the windows of my earthly tabernacle until the present period of my existence, now nearly three quarters of a year, as you reckon time, although with me but a little span of that incomprehensible future upon which I have entered. The change came to me unexpectedly, and, comparatively speaking, in the prime of life. To a more robust constitution, another twenty years might have been added. I regret not, however, that the hand which regulates the changes in man's experience was laid upon me thus suddenly. I passed away from darkness to light, from weakness to vigour, from the loving embrace of dear earthly friends, to experience a still more loving welcome from those who had preceded me. To behold with open eyes the wonders of the new life; to realise the throbbings of those spiritual pulsations which then commence to vibrate through the system; and to find, above all things, how natural and substantially real every feature of this new experience was, made death but the merest

shadow, and dying but a change from a lower to a higher condition of existence, infinitely preferable to the former, and in every respect favourable to the growth of man into higher states of being. Mankind, as a rule, look forward to the moment of dissolution with fear and trembling; having passed that line of separation, they wonder that the anticipation of it did not awaken in their breasts the noblest sentiments, and stimulate them to a better life; for if people would but think of it, the change is inevitable sooner or later, and therefore worthy of the highest and most constant consideration. I can plainly see now, that a practical belief in the future life when that belief embraces all the possibilities which are open to man on the earth, would greatly assist not only the life lived before, but the process which is connected with introduction to this higher sphere. Under such circumstances as those, much of that bewilderment which otherwise oppresses the soul on its entrance to the more interior life would be prevented, and the hearty acceptance of all those conditions which prevail, when we are drawn out of death into life, be more cordial. In the passage called death, I can assure you there is as conclusive evidence of the reign of law as under any other phase of our existence. The time, the circumstances, the period of awakening into the full consciousness, the appointment of position to be occupied, the measure of discipline, and the companionship, with the active developments of the spiritual faculties according to their ability, all are regulated by laws which cannot be infringed, and whereby both culture, activity, and happiness are secured in the highest degree. We seem to be free, free to think, free to act, free to go, free to associate with whomsoever we will, but really we are the subjects of such absolute control, that in the measure of our development we are confined to certain courses of action from which it would be impossible to deviate, and that on the basis of those unerring laws which are inevitable to man's existence as the creature of the Infinite Source of all life. You will perceive that I have thus only answered your question in general terms for the very reason that I gave, that while to me all the circumstances of my new experience appear quite natural, to the flesh-encumbered spirit those very circumstances would be as riddles impossible to solve, until you become the subject of that interior light whereby their significance can be discerned. Believe me when I say that I am happy—happy in the possession of associates who contribute to my comfort; happy in occupations wherein I find an outlet for the highest aspirations of my nature; and happy in the realisation of a progress, wherein I find a more than Jacob's ladder leading me nearer and nearer to the Infinite Source of life; and thus affording contact with the highest and noblest spirits, whom to know and commune with is the greatest privilege an immortal mind can enjoy. And, when I remember that this blessedness which I now enjoy is the birth-right of those whom I have left behind, my spirit leaps with joy as I anticipate the moment of their arrival, and the opportunity I shall then have of helping to introduce them to the secrets of this higher state of existence. O! how the sadness of earth life, with its dark shadows, would disappear, did men but learn to anticipate the bright visions of the more interior world; and how thankfully should they accept every means calculated to assist them in that anticipation. Could they but accept the teachings which are now being granted in the dispensation of a higher spiritism, the sunbeams of a wisdom which more particularly characterises the present period, and is so calculated to remove the darkness of a credal religion, and introduce in its place a religion of harmony conducive to human progress, unity and happiness, then would they enjoy a fuller and more satisfactory recognition of the Divine Being, and of the Brotherhood of Man, with a clearer conception of what they may expect when the shadows having passed away, the dawn of an eternal day shall arise to cheer and bless their waiting souls. Accept this in the meantime. * * * * *

I have carefully thought over your remarks, and would now like to ask a few questions which may perhaps lead to a fuller elucidation of your experience.

I will endeavour to answer them.

What was the first thing you remembered after you knew that you had passed away from your earthly tenement?

That I still enjoyed a continued individual existence, and which was rendered palpable to me not only from the action of my thoughts, and the ability to contemplate my condition, but also from the fact that I saw around me evidences of life in a vast variety of forms.

Do you refer to human forms especially?

Yes, but not exclusively; nature seemed to blossom forth in a degree that indicated a much higher stage of existence than the one I had left; in fact, I felt that I was in a new country, a world of which I never had conceived of before, excepting in my dreams.

Did the human forms around you appear to exert any particular influence upon you?

I felt happy in their presence; they seemed to cast an influence around me which imparted the most pleasant emotions, and within that charmed circle I realised a desire to enter more fully into the life which they appeared to enjoy.

Did you, from any cause, feel drawn back in desire to the earth life?

No, not then, my mind appeared to be absorbed with the new circumstances in which I was placed. I scarcely seemed to know that I had changed worlds, but for the new sensations which thrilled through my spirit. I have since discovered that this was the result of the influence my companions exerted upon me; they appeared to draw me off from the old circumstances of earth life, and while I gazed in wonder around me, they stood by, and watched with evident delight the operation of my thoughts.

Were you conscious of a passage to a distance after you left your earthly tenement?

I could only form an idea of such an experience from the changed circumstances in which I was placed; for aught I knew then, I might have been in the place where I closed my earth life, or I might have been millions of miles away. I have since discovered that my passage to what you would call a distance, was quite involuntary on my part, the result rather of the influence exerted upon my new condition of existence by the loving companions who attended me, than any intention on my part to remove to a distance. Time and space cannot be regarded in this life as in the one I had left. The laws are of a more elastic nature, and in their operation lead to results widely different to the heavy movements of matter and thought in the earth state.

On what principle did you recognise the people you were placed with as friends?

Mainly from the sympathy which drew us into immediate contact.

Can you tell me what special occupation, if any, you have been engaged in?

The necessity for activity finds its gratification in a variety of ways, not in the heavy forms of labour which earth life requires, but rather in learning to train the will to move in harmony with the conditions of this higher state. In this respect we are like children at school, who have to gather knowledge, and then to apply it to the uses of life. The objects from which we learn are the higher manifestations of the laws whereby the universe is governed, exhibited in ever changing forms of symmetry and beauty; and as we contemplate the harmony which is thus displayed, we seem to drink in new life.

It is said by some writers on the spiritual life, that the occupations of the spirit world are akin to those which prevail here, that is, as to their nature. Is it so?

That may have been said for the purpose of illustration, but the conditions of this state of existence involve employments rather of the mind than of the external organisation; to will, is to do, and to do things well is to learn first the nature of the laws whereby all things proceed here. The influence of external objects is rather of a subjective character, and the influence of mind upon mind, is more direct in its operation than in the earth life.

Have you met with, and recognised any of the friends you knew during the latter part of your earth life?

Yes, whom I have known from my earliest childhood; intercourse with some of these is more pleasant than

with others; and there are individuals here in whom I seem to feel a deeper interest than any I really knew in the earth life. It is quite true that we are all able to recognise our earthly kindred here, but the ties which bound us on earth are not necessarily binding here; the sympathy which alone unites soul to soul is based on a law which appears to regulate the great divisions of society in this state of existence; and that sympathy which exists in its incipient form in earth life, seems to come more into operation here, producing a result which, while it has the effect of forming individuals into societies and associations, awakens a general interest in all as members of the one great family.

Do you know your earth friends in the spirit world by the same names you knew them when here?

No, we do not; it is not by names, but by the qualities which distinguished them, and the influence which they exerted over us.

But could you not speak to me of individuals whom you have met by the names which distinguished them in earth life?

I could do so were it desirable, but no end could be gained thereby excepting to gratify curiosity, and which is not likely to lead to any advantage. I have already said, that the ground of union is sympathy, and my friends really are those who are now in sympathy with me. They might or might not be known to you.

Are you conscious of any change, such as day and night, repose and activity, or of travelling from one locality to another?

Your ideas of such experiences are regulated by the laws of your present stage of existence; with us it is quite different; our repose or our activity are but the phases of growth from a lower to a higher condition; and if we pass from one locality to another, it is to gather lessons of wisdom, which all parts of the vast material universe of the Infinite Father are capable of imparting. We are not restricted in our research; vast fields of investigation are open to the requirements of our nature, and in a freedom which is hedged about by laws wisely administered, we go hither and thither, according to the intuitions which are awakened within us.

Do social ties exist, and on what basis?

Yes, on the same basis as I have already referred to, viz., sympathy; here, individuals are drawn into association, which becomes more or less influential according to the degree of that sympathy; and by this means they are built up into more perfect forms of life. Kindred spirits experience attachments which render them more sensitively alive to the laws of their spiritual nature, and thus is their happiness increased. Let this suffice for the present."—JAS. MARTIN.

We desire to intimate that a postal card having been received from an unknown writer, containing a request to have some remark of Jas. Martin's explained more fully, the answer to that request is now presented in Mr. Martin's own words:—

Would you kindly ask the Rev. J. M. what he precisely means by saying that God does not manifest the emotion of love. "Surely God is love."

In answer to the above question I would reply that this person entirely misapprehends both your question to me, and my answer to you. The unity of the Infinite Father renders it utterly impossible, as I understand it, that He should exhibit any partial element of being such as may become an attribute of His creature. The names by which we distinguish the emotions common to man are but terms to represent phases of being; while the Infinite Father, in His undeviating procedure, can be known only by those laws which He has appointed for the governance of all things. Now, it in the study of these laws you perceive a benevolent intention to conduct all things to a harmonious issue, then you imagine that, to the Divine Being, there pertains the emotion of love; while that is but your way of looking at an operation, wherein God has become revealed to His creatures. In thinking of God, you must discard the human elements of character, excepting as they affect your own personality. He is something so infinitely above and beyond this, that human apprehension can never fathom the profound depths of His Being; and hence, when speaking of Him in the sense in which I

was, it might be proper to say that He does not manifest the emotion of love any more than he does the emotions of anger &c."—JAS. MARTIN.

H. J. B.

Powlett-street, East Melbourne, October 1877.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

Several letters and articles are unavoidably held over for want of space.

MODERN REVIVALISTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Your allusion in last issue to Mr. Henry Varley, the revivalist, will perhaps justify me in transcribing, for the edification of your readers, the following from Mr. V's published lecture, entitled "Trust in Christ." "I was addressing (pp. 11 & 12) a number of policemen last Friday night; and when we had ended, the inspector * * * stayed behind to thank us for the evening's entertainment. We had had tea together, and afterwards I told him the sweet story of the cross, and I said to him: 'Now, my dear friend, just tell me are you saved?' And he looked up into my face and said—'Well, I am an inspector, and there are some things that greatly trouble me * * * I have to say things at times which, whilst not directly untrue, yet look to me very much like deception, and that is a snare and a hindrance.' I said,—'My dear friend, don't have your mind filled with these thoughts. Let me ask you this question, Do you know that you are a saved man?' 'Oh, sir, I couldn't say that.' 'Why not? Don't you believe that your salvation comes by the death of Christ?' 'Yes,' he replied. 'Well, then' I said, 'is Jesus going to die for you?' 'Oh, no, he has died for me.' 'Then,' I said, 'my dear friend, it is as plain as that two and two make four, that if your salvation comes by the death of Christ, and He has died for you, that you are a saved man.' The inference to be drawn from all this, Mr. Editor, I need hardly pause to point out. It is, of course, that every individual that ever believed Jesus died for him is "a saved man"! And how many of us were, until recently, believers in the merits of Jesus' death! Oh, glorious thought, though we commit all manner of sin, we are safe, having once believed. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against us! Come, let us eat, drink, and be merry, for salvation is ours! *Vivat Varley!!*

I purposed making a few remarks in criticism of a lecture by Mr. V's predecessor, the Rev. Dr. Somerville. But I refrain, for these reasons:—1st. I know your space is precious; 2nd. The lecture referred to (The Bible for the World) has already been publicly handled by one of our freethought lecturers (could not the review be published?); and 3rd. I have too much respect for Dr. S. to make much mention of his name in connection with his successor, unless I were anxious (as I am not) to compare the scholar with the pedant, the orator with the mere talker, or earnest eloquence with offensive clap-trap declamation.

Yours truly,

VOX VERITATIS.

THE "NEW PILGRIM'S PROGRESS" &c.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—According to the *Harbinger*, you are wanting subscribers for the "New Pilgrim's Progress." Please put five copies to my name, and if the requisite number is not subscribed for (30) I desire to offer myself as a guarantee for the remainder.

Friend Bamford informed me last night that that most talented and highly gifted lady, Mrs. H. Britten, would visit Melbourne to lecture if her expenses were paid. Please put me down for one pound towards such expenses, or, to expedite the affair, I would be most happy, with nine others, to guarantee her expenses.

I am yours, &c.,

JAMES SHAW.

Castlemaine, October 12th, 1877.

THE BARNAWARTHA CIRCLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—As a member of the Barnawartha Circle since its commencement, some three years ago, I can safely say the seance, which was held on Wednesday evening last at the residence of the late Mr. James Mortenson, was by far the most enjoyable and satisfactory that has ever taken place here.

As you are aware (having recorded the sudden demise of the late Mr. Mortenson in the last issue of the *Harbinger*) that gentleman was a member of the Barnawartha Circle, an intelligent and consistent believer in Spiritualism, well beloved and respected by all who knew him, consequently more than usual interest was evinced by the members of the circle relative to the result of this, the first seance since the departure of our friend to the spirit world.

I may remark, *en passant*, that on the first night after the demise of our friend, his body being at the time in the house, two members of the circle passed the night there, viz., Robert Brown, our medium, brother-in-law to the deceased, and Richard Fiddes, his father-in-law. Mr. Brown, fell asleep, and Mr. Fiddes, being more wakeful, soon heard some raps on the floor, wall and ceiling of the room, getting louder and louder until they sounded like heavy blows of a hammer. Mr. F. asked if it was Mr. M., and received an answer in the affirmative. Mr. F. then, in the usual manner with the alphabet, received a communication to the effect that we were to have a seance at a time named, and he would endeavour to speak to us in the direct voice.

The particulars of that seance I will now endeavour to describe. The circle consisted of ten besides the medium, but unfortunately circumstances over which I had no control prevented me from being present at the commencement of the seance, and the spirit, noting my absence, desired Mr. Eggleston to go and look me up. My presence, I suppose, being essential to the balance of positive and negative power requisite for suitable conditions. Upon my arrival at the circle room, I was told that our friend Mr. M. had already spoken to them in the direct voice, but I very soon heard for myself, for, to my intense satisfaction, Mr. M. patted me on the head, and in his own natural voice, which I could recognise among ten thousand, told me that he was glad that I had come, for my presence was friendly to the perfection of conditions. I then heard him address almost every member of the circle singly, passing his hand through the hair of Mr. Fiddes. In answer to a question put by him relative to a conversation they had just previous to his departure, he said it appeared that Mr. Fiddes was right in asserting that the Turks would beat the Russians he having now better facilities for acquiring information, and was of the same opinion now himself. After some remarks in the direct voice by some of our old spirits, and singing some hymns, composed expressly for the circle, Mr. M. addressed his wife in clear and distinct tones. He told her to cheer up, and not grieve for him, he also suggested that she should pay a visit to her sister, Mrs. Brown, the wife of the medium residing in Chiltern, on the following day, remarking that he was sure that she would be welcome, and the change would do her good. He then addressed Mrs. Eggleston, who was at my left hand, and urged her to try and comfort Lizzie (*i.e.*, his wife), for he was very happy. After Professor Dytan (one of our spirit friends) had expressed his regret at not being able to give the lecture he had promised us for some time past, on account of having to utilise an excess of power for the benefit of our friend, Mr. M., to enable him to speak to us, they bade us good night, and thus ended, to my mind, one of the most valuable and instructive seances that has ever fallen to my lot to enjoy. I would remark, although we have now for a long time had the pleasure of hearing spirits talk to us like "mortal speaking to mortal," yet this is the first time I have been able to recognise the familiar natural voice of one (now an inhabitant of the great beyond) with whom I had conversed with but a little while before in the body. Trusting I have not encroached too much on your space,

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

W. C. SMITH.

THE DIRECT SPIRIT VOICE, HAND, &c.

MR. ROBERT BROWN, who for some time past has been the medium through whom such extraordinary manifestations have been produced at the Barnawartha Circle, is now in Melbourne. With a view to satisfy numerous enquirers a circle has been formed, and several sittings already have taken place at which marvellous results have occurred—the direct spirit voice and hands being heard and felt by all present. As this will be an opportunity of seeing something tangible, intending visitors should call on Mr. Purton, 106 Elizabeth-street.

WALKER, the Spiritualist trance lecturer, as he calls himself, finishes here shortly and goes direct to Brisbane. He has made money here, and I am in a position to say that he has also made a large number of converts to Spiritualism; in fact, this form of insanity has been slowly but surely spreading for a long time in Sydney, and it numbers among its apostles several prominent men. Three or four members of Parliament are affected, and others are suspected of being tinged with the disorder, but afraid to own it.—Sydney Correspondent of *Brisbane Courier*.

THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—I have read with great interest an excellent letter in each of the last two numbers of the *Harbinger*, being a reply to the Rev. Dr. Moorhouse on the Messianic Prophecies.

Another instance of Christ's human or earthly nature can be found in the non-accomplishment of his prophecies registered in the 24th chapter, verses 29th and 34th of the Gospel of Matthew, where we read as follows:—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

Well, every one knows that more than eighteen generations have passed away, and the above predictions have not happened, and never will happen, because the stars cannot fall from heaven, for in whichever direction they were to fall they would always be in heaven or in the firmament, which has no end nor limit whatever, so one part of this prognostic did not occur, and the other part cannot occur. This shows again that Christ was not a divinity, and not even a clever astronomer.

In the 4th chapter, 8th verse, of the same Gospel, we read thus:—"Again the devil taketh him (Jesus) up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," &c.

This is another ignorance of astronomy; for if the author of this verse had had the least knowledge even of geography, he would have been aware that no one could see the whole world, which is round, even by standing on the highest mountain of the globe, upon which the farthest distance reached by any human eye cannot be more than a comparatively short distance; and in supposing the devil meant to speak of the kingdoms upwards, or in the heavens, then they could have been seen as well on the flat, or level earth, as on a mountain.

Some people affirm that the generation Christ spoke of did not mean a hundred years or century. How many years, then, did he mean by a generation? Did he mean a thousand years? No, this could not be, for if we read the 17th verse of the first chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, we see that Christ's pedigree consists of forty-two generations, namely, about four thousand two hundred years, not forty-two thousand years. Since the world, according to the Bible, is only about six thousand years old, a generation could not even mean five hundred years, so it must have meant, as we all know, one century, or the life-time of a man in those periods.

The announcement of Christ's resurrection is also a story devoid of authenticity. No one witnessed it; and his alleged ascension to heaven was only seen, it is said, by a few of his friends or disciples, who could easily spread such a report in those backward and credulous ages; so this heavenly voyage is merely a rumour invented by Christ's own partisans, and by no one else; and as I have already shown that Christ was not a divinity, his bodily ascension must be a falsehood.

Mahomet, according to the reports of the Koran, made heavenly voyages, in which no one of us is inclined to believe. He also pretended to receive all his revelations from the Angel Gabriel, who, he said, was sent from God on purpose to deliver them unto him.

In the first chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, 20th verse, Joseph is said to have dreamed that an "angel appeared to him, saying, 'Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.'" I would ask here, which of the two tales (Mahomet's or Joseph's) appear the most unreliable. Why did not the angel appear to Joseph in broad daylight, and before credible witnesses? How did Joseph know that it was an angel, for it seems he only dreamt it.

The Mohammedan population of the world is reckoned at 150,000,000, and, strange to say, has hitherto been untouched by any energetic or systematic Christian

effort, the fact being Christianity has no better foundation to rest on than Islamism has in the collection of revelations which makes up the Koran, and which is the Bible of the Mahommedans.

Moreover, when Christ's alleged resurrection from his grave took place, why did he not appear before the eyes of his murderers to show them his celestial power, instead of appearing only in the midst of a few of his disciples at another place far off?

Do such records not justify us in doubting—nay, in denying—the reality of that resurrection? Had his persecutors, or even strangers, witnessed his revival and ascension, and spoken to him, then we could in a certain degree believe it; but reports spread by his own disciples, and by no one else, are suspicious.

A lover of fair play says, in a letter which appears in your paper of 1st inst., that my contributions to your journal are giving offence to some good meaning people, which I much regret. I am pleased, however, to see that he concedes to me a perfect right, so long as I am sincere, to handle texts of Scripture in the manner I do. Sincerity, however, does not consist in speaking your mind on all occasions, but in doing it when silence would be censurable and inexcusable.

Yours, &c.,

LAYMAN.

Vaughan, October 15th, 1877.

DIVINISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I have to thank Mr. Melchior for his polite and learned reply to my question. His reply contains some truths, with which I quite acquiesce; but I should have understood it better, and appreciated it more, if he had substituted facts for opinions and assertions; given us the facts, and allowed us to form our own deductions from them. Some of his statements are also so vague that I find difficulty in comprehending them; for instance, I read that "Divinity is everything." If he holds everything to be divine, I fail to comprehend our learned friend's meaning! Again he writes, "Water and fire (hydrogen and oxygen), make everything." Create divinity, I conclude! I must say, when I think of water and fire, hydrogen and oxygen, and divinity, I have distinctly different ideas in my mind, but unless our friend will confine himself to terms I clearly comprehend, and furnish *proof* for what he says, I must continue in my present state of ignorance.

Mr. Melchior seems to be in a similar state with respect to my question. He does not appear to comprehend my meaning. I shall endeavour to make it more obvious, as I cannot conceive that "Water and fire (hydrogen and oxygen) make everything." He surely will allow that air, without which living organisms could not survive an hour, is composed of 80 parts of NITROGEN, to 20 parts of oxygen; and that the atmosphere so composed, for about forty miles surrounds our globe; to say nothing of the multitude of minerals beneath our feet, which are neither oxygen nor hydrogen! *Truth means an accurate representation of what is, and can only be understood through accurate language.*

He asserts that "there is no ruler in the universe!" The habit so common among clergymen of asserting their opinions to be truth, has a very demoralising effect on the community; who naturally follow the bad example of their teachers, affirm books to be divine, the origin of which they know nothing about, and so circulate a thousand false opinions as truths. I dare not therefore contradict my friend's assertion concerning God, but will give one of many reasons for thinking that there exists an Infinitely Wise Intelligence, whom we term God; and give my former question in other words. Geology demonstrates to us that the earth is of igneous origin; for all her primary rocks are of a crystalline character and volcanic, and not of sedimentary structure. Now man is upon the earth—how came he there? The fire could not make him, nor could the matter; neither could the oxygen or hydrogen; and it is certain he could not make himself! Examine the human body, and you will find it contains indisputable evidence of wonderful design! The heart is a forcing pump, the lungs act

as bellows; the stomach, like a furnace, supplies the heat generating power; the limbs produce locomotion; the teeth grind food, while the mouth acts as a musical instrument; the eyes are telescopes; the skull resembles a telegraphic office; the nervous system acts as wires, which communicate intelligence from all the different senses, and through which also the whole system is directed and preserved, everything is registered and recorded that transpires in and around us! Mark the wondrous skill, the adaptation, the durability, the perfection! The valves in the heart work *every moment*, untired and unworn, pulsating for three score years and ten! Nay what is more remarkable our bodies are capable of reproducing others like themselves. Who gave them this power? breathed into their nostrils the breath of life? bestowed upon them free will, reason and intelligence? Who designed and constructed this wonderful creature, endowed him with these faculties? *Was it oxygen and hydrogen?* or THE INFINITE AND UNKNOWNABLE, WHOM WE REVERE AS GOD.

I am, Sir, &c.,

A TRUTH SEEKER.

IS MATTER IMPERVIOUS TO SPIRIT?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,

A few years ago a case was recorded of a slave-owner thrusting some negroes into a heated oven where they were kept securely enclosed for several hours. When the oven was opened the bodies were found to be baked almost to cinders. Now, I wish to inquire what became of the spirits of those negroes. At death, did they exude through the oven? Or if not, did the intense heat affect them?

Yours &c.,

V.

[Matter is not impervious to spirit; but spiritual forms (except of a highly sublimated nature) could not pass through solid matter without temporary disorganization. In this instance this would not be necessary, the spiritual particles would pass like a gas through minute apertures, or pores of the oven, and the spiritual body would form above the oven, or house that contained it.—*Ed H. of Lt.*]

DIRECT SLATE-WRITING.

Yackandandah, Oct. 21st, 1877.

MR. EDITOR.—Last night Dr. Mueller investigated the direct-writing by spirit agency, through the mediumship of Elizabeth ——. He was more than satisfied, for we obtained more than was expected by the most sanguine of us. It will be gratifying to your readers to know that a gentleman of the doctor's ability has been convinced of the truth of direct spirit-writing, and which, I have not the least doubt, he will give you the fullest particulars in the forthcoming "Harbinger" for November. I have now to tell you that we have just held another seance, at which the undersigned witnesses were present. I constructed a dark cabinet by covering the table in the front room with a dark blanket and the table cloth. The medium sat alone at the table: the rest sat away from it. A single slate with a small piece of pencil was passed by the medium under the table, she sitting sideways to the table with one hand on the top. After a minute or two, a message came in the direct-writing from my little daughter, who passed into spirit-life last Sunday, the 13th of October. It was as follows:—"Mamma, kiss Florence for me;" Florence being the little baby. I asked something in reference to a favorite school-book of hers who should I give it to? The answer came: "If you give it to anyone give it to aunt." And then—"Dadaie, I love you." A few other messages, fully demonstrating to us the fact of the phenomena being genuine and true in every particular, and to which we append our names: H. Crambrook, E. Crambrook, A. Crambrook, S. Walsh, William Allott, Clara Chappell.

Yours truly,

GEO. S. CHAPPELL.

THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE.—The chairman of this circle, writing from Sandhurst under date of the 15th October, says:—"We have been holding our sittings for direct spirit writing, *a la* Slade, every Sunday evening regularly, but beyond a few pencil marks or "pot-hooks" on the slate have, so far, obtained nothing of any moment. I now write to tell you that our young writing medium has gone away to Castlemaine with his father, and, consequently, our circle is at an end, all our winter sittings having thus been thrown away. It is, no doubt, very provoking, but it cannot be helped, and so we must bear it as best we may. There are still four of the old Energetic Circle remaining, and I think it probable that we shall, with our old medium to keep us company, resume our sittings for another object, of which I shall have more to say when the matter has been fixed and settled.

"HOW ARE WE SAVED?"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I have met with a small tract, referred to in your last number, entitled as above, and a perusal of it has bewildered me not a little. If I felt sure that what it states with regard to Biblical manuscripts were true, I would at once give up many of the theological notions which I now hold. But I cannot bring myself to think that its assertions are facts, for if they were why should there be so many learned and honest men who so stoutly maintain the authenticity of the Scriptures? Surely if the pamphlet speaks the truth theologians have nothing to stand on. I showed the tract to a clergyman, and stated my doubts to him, but he said the assertions were utterly unfounded and false. Yesterday, however, I was told by a literary gentleman, who is a sound Christian believer, that the anonymous writer only too truly stated facts. What am I to think? Oh, sir, I ask you to honestly inform me whether they are really truth or fiction? and let me know what authority there is for the statements?

Anxiously waiting your answer in next *Harbinger*,

Yours sincerely,
ANXIOUS INQUIRER.

OUTLINES OF SPIRITUALISM.

By FREDERIC BOND.

No. IX.—OUR SPIRIT-HOME.

"There eyes that closed in darkness
Shall open to the morn;
And those whom death had stricken
Shall find themselves new-born;
The lame shall leap with gladness,
The blind rejoice to see;
The slave shall know no master,
And the prisoner shall be free!"

Of the many erroneous impressions current concerning Spiritualism, perhaps the most difficult to remove is that which attributes a *quasi*-omniscience and omnipotence to the inhabitants of the spirit-spheres. Non-spiritualists are apt to imagine that when the spirit forsakes its frame of clay it straightway becomes a kind of demigod; that it is able to accomplish all sorts of miraculous feats, is cognisant of everything proceeding either in this world or its own; that it instantly discards all the passions by which it was attended in earth-life, and, fairy-like, is metamorphosed into an entirely new-born being, possessing infinite wisdom and knowledge, and wholly destitute of blemish or impurity. Such an impression, a little dispassionate reflection must conclusively demonstrate is altogether false. In the attributes of the human spirit the inexorable King of Terrors effects no change whatever. Possessing all the virtues and vices which marked its career in this world, the spirit, at its appointed time, passes through the portals of the Spiritual Kingdom unaltered and unimpaired. It preserves, moreover, a recollection of the experiences of the past—else wherein would lie the benefit of those experiences?—and it retains the same moral feelings, emotions and yearnings, and is quickened by the same germs of sympathy and aspiration as those which animated it here upon earth. Perhaps there is not a better or more beautiful conception of what Death brings about than the allegory in the Pagan mythology representing that universally-dreaded event as a butterfly escaped from its chrysalis. At first the caterpillar is seen confined in its chrysalis; but when the hour is ripe it bursts through its external covering, and is instantly transformed into the unfettered gay butterfly. In like manner the spirit of man rends asunder the bonds of Death, and (though preserving all its virtues and vices) is ushered into a new state of existence—its spirit-home.

Yes, its Spirit-Home!—our Summerland! what tongue shall tell of its unbounded pleasures, its Elysian bliss? what vision shall conceive of its golden-lands, its crystal waters, its bright cerulean sky, its warm radiant sun, its magnificent palaces? What brush shall paint its peaceful valleys, its immense forests, its pellucid lakes, its fertile pastures, its verdant plains, its gorgeous flowers? What poet shall sing of its exquisite strains of music, of its balmy air, its language of sympathy and love? What pen shall describe the beauteous favors of its inhabitants, the undying affection that those inhabitants retain for the dear ones they have left to struggle on the earth-plane? Ah, surely none; for all were far too

feeble. Difficult as the task is, however, let me endeavour to give a fair idea of the spirit-spheres and their people. Using the information that spirits of the highest intelligence and the strictest integrity now communicating with the denizens of this world have handed down from their immortal abodes during the past quarter of a century, let me claim the patience and attention of the reader while I humbly try to sketch as concisely as possible the nature of spirits, their dwelling-places, their occupation, their power, and all that pertains to them, so far as we yet know.

It may be observed at the outset, then, that the spirit-world is as material to the perception of its inhabitants as the earth is to the physical sense. This fact, startling though it may appear to some of my readers, is most distinctly and emphatically insisted upon by our spirit friends. As the natural world is objective to the physical eye so is the spiritual world objective to the spiritual sight, though, of course, subjective to the external senses. In our next state of existence we shall be surrounded by similar scenery to that which we find here; we shall be able to pursue occupations similar in nature to those which we delight in following here. There will be beautiful landscapes to meet our view, congenial souls to associate with, and a Higher Light to guide us onwards and strengthen our aspirations. We shall see cosy-looking valleys, and large, blue, winding rivers, and magnificent mansions, and towering mountains, and multifarious, gorgeously-coloured flowers, and sweet-scented shrubs, and noble waving trees. And we shall hear rapturous strains of music there—the music of the spheres—far more melodious and ravishing than can be produced by mortal hands upon an earthly instrument; we shall feast our eyes upon scenery far more dazzling and sublime than human mind can appreciate even in its maddest transports of ecstatic vision; and we shall be cheered with a light far more brilliant and genial than that which is imparted by the noon-day sun. Everything will be as tangible to our spiritual sense of perception as material objects are to our physical sense. Yes, to re-echo the words of Hudson Tuttle:—

“Such is the Spirit-world. It is a world. It is a matter-of-fact world, more real than earth. It is no ghost-land—no vale of shadows—but the ultimate essence of reality.”

Spirits affirm that their world is divided into spheres, which in their turn are sub-divided into circles or societies. These spheres—of which there are said to be seven, though many spirits assert there are more—are located at irregular distances around each other, with the earth as their centre. A good idea of the position of the spheres may be afforded if we suppose the Earth to be Saturn and the spheres to be the rings (only seven in number instead of four) encircling the latter planet. The first sphere or zone is included in our atmosphere, and the second is about 60 miles distant from the earth. Concerning the spaces existing between the remaining spheres the representations of the spirits indicate a lack of unanimity, though the distances assigned are by no means extravagantly different. Dr. Eugene Crowell, of America, in a work called *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*, gives a table of the distances of the respective spheres from each other, which he declares to be “the result of free and frequent communication” with his spirit friends; and as the table in question substantially agrees with the teachings of the majority of the spirits, I here quote it:—

“The first sphere,” he says, “is within our atmosphere.”

The 2nd is about 60 miles from the earth.

3rd	100	2nd and 160 from the earth.
4th	150	3rd 310
5th	150	4th 460
6th	175	5th 635
7th	250	6th 865

“The six spheres above the first,” says Dr. Hare, whose zealous promulgation of the cause of Spiritualism is too well known to need comment here, “are concentric zones, or circles, of exceedingly refined matter, encompassing the earth-like belts or girdles. They have atmospheres of peculiar vital air, soft and balmy. Their surfaces are diversified with an immense variety of picturesque landscapes, with lofty mountain ranges, valleys, rivers, lakes, forests, trees and shrubbery, and flowers of every colour and variety, sending forth grateful emanations.”

The first sphere is not on earth, but a little distance from it, though so little, in fact, that many of the inhabitants of this sphere (who it may be mentioned *en passant* are composed for the most part of “gross, material, and very ignorant spirits”) are constantly attracted to it; and actually live under the delusion that they are not dead; so real is spirit-existence. This last assertion will perhaps meet with a very emphatic “Humbug!” at the hands of the sceptic; and it must be admitted that this laconic expletive, more vehement than elegant though it undoubtedly is, cannot be regarded as either disingenuous or unjustifiable. Indeed, the fact just recorded appears so unlikely if not absolutely monstrous at first blush that a slight digression, in order to place it in a proper light to be divested of its *primæ facie* air of extravagance and shown to be both reasonable and natural, will not be considered out of place.

That many spirits, after their transition from earth-life to spirit-life, imagine that they are not dead, is a fact frequently forced upon the attention of those who are in the habit of seeking communications from the other world. It is borne out, moreover, by the testimony of that immortal Seer, Emanuel Swedenborg, who, in his treatise on *Heaven and Hell*, says—“Many spirits possessing very strong earthly affections, cannot, on their arrival in the spiritual world, believe that they have quitted the earth; they often remain a long time in this uncertainty.” I remember, too, being at a *seance* one evening, when the medium was controlled by a spirit who had departed this life only a few days previously, and who stoutly maintained that he was not dead; and it was only after repeated assurances to the contrary on the part of those present that the “control” was undeceived as to the actual state of things, and acknowledged himself to have been in error. And seeing that the first sphere, whither so many spirits wend their way after death, is “within our atmosphere,” where the scenery and modes of living are so like our own, can this prevalent delusion be wondered at? Of course, the truth must dawn upon the perception of such spirits sooner or later; but the fact still remains as stated; and herein lies one of the benefits that some of our spirit friends may derive from people upon earth—to learn that they have passed through the change called Death, and thus be enabled to progress to higher spheres and brighter scenes in proportion to their deeds and aspirations.

Of the remaining six spheres let it suffice to say that each is more beautiful than the one preceding it; whilst their inhabitants become happier and happier, and wiser and wiser as they progress. Each sphere, as has been already stated, consists of societies, of which the number is infinite, the spirit gravitates to that sphere for which it is adapted by reason of the good and evil deeds committed in the flesh; and upon its entry into such sphere, whichever of the seven it may be, it is attracted by the law of affinity to one of the innumerable societies or circles by which it finds itself surrounded. How frequently do we see this law of affinity exemplified in every day life. The statesman delights in the company of the statesman, the warrior in that of the warrior; the literary man finds pleasure in associating with literary men, the sporting man in fraternizing with the sporting man; while thieves, murderers, and villains are usually to be found consorting with persons of their own type. The aphorism, “Like attracts like,” is not less applicable to the conditions of spiritual life than it is to those of earthly existence.—

“Man at death,” the celebrated and wonderful trance-medium, Mr. Morse, of London, says, “ascends to his proper abode, according to his affinities, and he gradually progresses from the lower to the higher. The lower spirits, whose affinities and natures tie them to the earth, remain and live upon the earth after the dissolution of the physical body. Low spirits, in passing from a lower to a higher state, are insensible for a short period, and in a state analogous to physical death upon earth, although there is no putting off one body and taking on another. The higher spirits do not lose consciousness while undergoing the change. The law of external progression applies to all matter: and the earth is slowly spiritualizing itself. When the outer sphere connected with this earth is reached by man, his progression does not end there; for in the universe of God there are higher abodes still, and his course is ever upwards.”

And Hudson Tuttle says:—

“Affinity controls the relations of man, and he forms such

relations and connections as are genial, and avoids the opposite. The low congregate together, and avoid the society of the refined; while the learned and moral delight in each other's society."

It would appear, too, that some of the spheres are subject to periods of light and darkness analogous to our own day and night; for, in speaking upon this subject, Mr. Morse's guides inform us that—

"The spheres immediately related to the planet earth are subject to the rising and setting of the sun and other orbs in their spiritual aspects. In the higher spheres everything is self-luminous, and each individual gives out a light characteristic of his individuality."

So much for the description of our Spirit-Home. Let me now conclude with a brief reference to its people, their nature and occupation.

Independent of the authority of St. Paul, whose dicta must at all times be accepted *quantum valeant*, it has been taught from very early times that there is a spiritual as well as a natural body. Spirits declare that in form and feature they are similar to human beings; but it is pleasant to be assured that in no instance are their organizations afflicted with the imperfections, diseases or malformations which so frequently blight the lives of poor, frail humanity below. The similarity existing between the inhabitants of the two worlds is confirmed by Swedenborg, unquestionably one of the most gifted and reliable clairvoyants that have ever lived, who says:—

"From all my experience, which I have now enjoyed for many years, I can declare and affirm that angels,* as to form, are in every respect men; that they have faces, eyes, ears, a body, arms, hands, feet, and that they see, hear, and converse with each other; in short, that they are deficient in nothing that belongs to a man, except that they are not clothed upon with a material body. I have seen them in their own light, which exceeds in brightness, by many degrees, the noon-day light of the world; and in that light I have beheld all the features of their faces more distinctly and clearly than it is possible to see the features of man on earth. It also has been granted me to see an angel of the inmost heaven. His face was more bright and resplendent than those of the angels of the lower heavens. I examined him; and I can declare that he had the human form in its utmost perfection."

And not only are the bodies of spirits formed similar to our own but they are also clothed with garments.

We are told that female spirits wear long flowing robes, and male spirits somewhat shorter ones, the garments in both cases being generally white, though in many instances they are coloured; whilst the majority of females bedeck themselves with flowers and leaves. The food of the spirits is composed of *thought*. "Therefore," says Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan, a celebrated abnormal speaker, "if a man have paucity of brain or mind upon earth he enters the spirit-world a beggar." The inhabitants of the spheres have plenty of occupation on hand, in which they experience great happiness; and when they are idle they are miserable. Their modes of occupation are various. Some spirits, particularly the females, devote their attention to the spiritual training of children; others are engaged in working out great philosophical problems.

"They live! but O, not idly,
To fold their hands to rest,
For they who love God truly,
Are they who serve him best.
Love brightens all their labors,
And makes all duty sweet;
Their hands are never weary,
Nor way-worn are their feet."

"What of the suicide in the next world?" it may be asked by the investigator. Yes, what picture do the spirits paint of the spiritual condition of him who has been prematurely launched into eternity by his own hands? It has been said by some philosophers that to deliberately take one's own life is in some respects a brave act; but to discuss this aspect of the question would occupy more space than I could afford to devote to the purpose. Suffice it to say that under no circumstances do I consider self-destruction justifiable. A man grows weary of the world, and longs to depart from it; he is unhappy, and thinks that by death he will be

able to avoid his misery. Unfortunate man! Does he not know that

"He
That kills himself to avoid misery, fears it;
And at the best shows a bastard valour."

It is the coward that "sneaks to death;" "the brave lives on." Let him who is sick of life, oppressed by misfortunes, or afflicted with disease, learn the emphatic lesson of Spiritualism:—

"There is no hope for the suicide to better his condition by plunging recklessly into the unknown. Death should not be desired; it will meet you soon enough—at least before you are prepared. Your motto should be, I will leave the world better than I found it. Each should employ the talents he possesses. What use is death? If you ask the disembodied suicide, who hung himself because mad with care and misfortune, if death had removed these, or bettered his situation, his answer would be a wail of agony. To avoid a few forebodings he had plunged into a sea of despair."

As to the idiot, our spirit-friends assure us that under the tutelage of good and wise spirits his mental faculties are slowly but surely developed. The insane, too, are speedily liberated from all traces of mental aberration; the deaf and dumb are no longer so when they enter the spirit world; and the cripple is no longer a cripple.

I now ask the rational mind to compare this description of our spiritual abode with the puerile account of Heaven and the revolting sketch of Hell so zealously propagated throughout the length and breadth of orthodox Christendom. Spiritualism does not say, "Believe, and ye shall be saved; disbelieve, and ye shall be cast out into eternal perdition." It says, "If your reason approve you are justified in believing; if after mature and dispassionate reflection, however, you reject the teachings of Spiritualism, you are at perfect liberty to do so." But be sure, dear reader, that you examine our claims in a careful and unprejudiced spirit; fail not to judge as you yourself would like to be judged. And, above all, fear not the truth; whatever you feel convinced of hesitate not to declare it, no matter what the consequences may be, but do so calmly and consistently. Let each of us remember that mankind is mortal—that death will overtake us sooner or later. May death find us all prepared to enter the world, which, with the limited materials I have at hand, I have attempted to describe—our Spirit Home!

"It lies about us like a cloud—
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be!"

DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

We have a letter from Bro. Peebles, dated Madras, August 31st, in which he expresses his delight with the amount of mediumship, magic, and psychological phenomena he has witnessed. "Casting out devils," he says, "is as common in Southern India as it used to be in Palestine in Jesus' time." He is much saddened by the sights of suffering incident to the prevailing famine, and expresses his deep sympathy for the sufferers. The following is from the *Madras Daily Times*:—

"Three weeks ago we announced the arrival in Madras of Dr. J. M. Peebles, formerly an American Consul in Asiatic Turkey, and the author of several books. During the period that he has been in Madras he has been most industrious in obtaining information from all sources, and the chapters of his forthcoming work, devoted to Southern India, should be most interesting. Dr. Peebles sails on Monday next by the Suffolk for Natal and Cape Town, en route to England. The Doctor, during his stay here, has exhibited that push and energy which is characteristic of Americans. Though he has been, as we have said, hardly three weeks in Madras, he has managed to visit the famine camps, the Leper Hospital, the museum, libraries, all the public buildings and burning ghauts. He has witnessed the clever feats of magicians, seen the devil priests professedly cast out demons, looked into a higher class of psychological phenomena, difficult to get at and more difficult to comprehend, and met a good many native gentlemen of various castes. He has also received from the Chief Secretary to Government much kindness in the way of a sight of public documents, and in every conceivable way has had the opportunity of seeing all sides of our social life. Dr. Peebles was at the breakfast in the Banqueting Hall yesterday in honor of the Viceroy, and was charmed with the almost Republican freedom evinced. They have nothing of the kind in the West, he says, and he thinks he has a wrinkle from the ancient civilisation of India to bring before the century-old Republic of the New World. We shall look forward to the publication of Dr. Peebles' forthcoming work with interest."

*Speaking of "angels" in a subsequent portion of his volume on *Heaven and Hell*, Swedenborg affirms that they have been "derived from the human race;" hence the "spirit" of the Spiritualist and the "angel" of the Swedenborgian are in this respect convertible terms.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S CONVICTION FOR FREE
PRINTING ON THE POPULATION QUESTION.

A LAY SERMON, BY H. K. RUSDEN.

*Read to the Sunday Free Discussion Society, on 26th
August, 1877. Trades' Hall, Melbourne.*

"My people are destroyed—for lack of knowledge."

Hosea, iv., 6.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LECTURE.

AMONG many tracts on the Population Question, I possess two copies of the now celebrated "Fruits of Philosophy; or, the Private Companion of Young Married People," by Dr. Knowlton, of America. One copy was published in London, by James Watson in 1843, the other also in London by F. Farrah, at a subsequent date not given. It is said that this tract was published in London about 1843, and has ever since been sold unrestrictedly.

Dr. Knowlton, recognising that poverty becomes overwhelming to those who have more children than they can provide for, and demoralising to society, recommends a plan by which people can prevent the evil, and have no more children than they desire. His expedient is one which might be recommended as a simple measure of cleanliness. But I consider some later books as much better—notably, the "Elements of Social Science," in which five expedients are named (Dr. Knowlton's being one), but of which the one attributed to M. Raciborski, I consider and recommend as far preferable to the others. A pamphlet entitled, "Poverty, its Cause and Cure," is the next best. In this five methods are suggested, of which the last, M. Raciborski's, is, I think, by far the best. I can inform anyone wanting either of these publications where they are to be got.

When Mr. Watson died, the plates of Dr. Knowlton's tract were bought by Mr. Charles Watts, who sold copies until the 9th January last, when he was suddenly arrested, and committed for trial on 5th February for publishing the book. After first agreeing with Mr. Bradlaugh, by whom he was employed as sub-editor of the *National Reformer*, that the publication of the book should be defended, he appears to have become frightened, and pleaded guilty to publishing an obscene book, and got clear at a cost of £200.

Mr. Bradlaugh was highly indignant at this cowardly surrender of the right to print freely on the population question for the relief of the poor, and the benefit of the world. He said he would not have published the book as he did not like it; but that it was dishonorable and injurious to the cause of freethought to admit the right of anyone to dictate as to what is to be printed. In March last, therefore, he and Mrs. Besant agreed, in spite of the great disadvantage of the recent condemnation of the book as immoral by its former publisher, they agreed I say, magnanimously, to republish the book at once, and encounter the results.

On the 23rd March, Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant published the book, personally delivering the first copies to the Chief Clerk to the Magistrates at Guildhall, to the head office of the City Police, and to the Solicitor of the City of London, giving notice that on the 24th they intended to sell it at a certain place and hour. On that day, at 4 p.m., they began to sell, and sold 500 in the first 20 minutes, and have since sold, it is said, 120,000 copies. On the 29th March they were arrested, and bailed in sureties of £100 each, and themselves in £200 each, to appear on the 17th. The case occupied some days, but on the 26th both were committed for trial, and released upon their own recognisances; the magistrate remarking that the proceedings should not have been by arrest, but by summons. On the 4th May, Mr. Bradlaugh applied for and obtained a writ of *certiorari* to take the case before the higher Court of Queen's Bench, his personal security for the costs being accepted. The case was tried on the 18th June, and particulars are given in the *Times* and *Home News*. The Chief Justice, in summing up, said that it was a most ill-advised prosecution. There was not a word in the pamphlet, he said, calculated to excite the passions. The

verdict of the jury was, nevertheless, to the effect that the book was calculated to debase public morals, but they entirely exonerated the defendants from any corrupt motives in publishing it. On the 28th the Chief Justice, after saying that they might have been released on their own recognisances had they not persisted in pushing the sale of the book after the verdict, passed the sentence on each defendant of six months' imprisonment, with a fine of £200, giving also security for good behaviour to the amount of £500. At the same time execution of the sentence was postponed, pending the decision of a writ of error to quash the original indictment. Considering that the verdict was in direct opposition to the wording of the indictment, it seems probable that the appeal would be successful, and if meantime the sale of the book has been stopped, there are better books in circulation, which I have already indicated.

The subject of the pressure of population is far the most important and necessary to be discussed by the people, and Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant deserve not only to have their expenses freely paid, but the blessings of the people, for stepping into the breach at their own risk to save the people the right of freely discussing it.

THUS we find that this most important truth, that the "people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," was not unknown 2000 years ago. Yet at the present day there is none which is more persistently ignored and contravened, and particularly I regret to say by English people. Though our countrymen boast so loudly of their political freedom, there is no people on the face of the earth in more abject slavery to a blind and tyrannical conventionalism; which for peace sake the more rational among them would perhaps not trouble themselves to oppose, were it not for the cruel wrongs of which it compels them to be not only spectators, but in part also even perpetrators. But those who have eyes to see, heads to understand, and hearts to feel for the grinding poverty—the degrading vices, and the too frequent crimes of so many of their neighbors, together with the heartless indifference with which their hard fate is regarded by nearly all who are fortunate enough to escape it themselves,—would be criminal indeed, could they stand tamely by and see the "people" thus "destroyed for lack of knowledge" without raising their hands and voices to save a remnant at least from destruction. I believe there is no other nation which so deliberately constitutes it a crime to disseminate among those who perish for want of it—knowledge of the most important description; the lack of which is the immediate cause of crimes without number and misery untold. No other nation is so irrational and so cruel.

In France, Germany and Italy, political printing may be under restriction or prohibition, but there is none upon what is of much more importance,—physiological investigation and experiment. In England, the freedom of political printing has been secured by the determined efforts of a few men like R. Carlile, Holyoake, and Bradlaugh, who valued intellectual liberty even more highly than their personal freedom; but let anyone be known to attempt to communicate or to gain—among English people—scientific or social knowledge of the most urgent importance, and he is at once visited with social pains and legal penalties. It is more than doubtful whether the English are as well governed as even the French. They have the satisfaction of imagining and saying that *they govern themselves*; but it is a grave question how far this privilege is a gain or a loss; used as it is to drive others to commit crimes simply for lack of knowledge, and then to punish them for doing what they have been driven to do. The fact is that politics is invested in England with an entirely fictitious importance—by those who make it a trade, and by the press, to which it furnishes so much extra matter to print. In Sergeant Sleight's late letter (13th August) to the *Argus*, he shews how here as well as in England, the actual number of persons who really interest themselves in the subject is altogether trifling. We well know how very few good men can be induced to take a part in politics, and how when they do, they are immediately elbowed out by inferior men. It is really not worth

their while—not worth their attention. There is much more good to be done otherwise, by work like ours here. We tend to form public opinion, of which politics is only a result. But in England it would seem that the ingenuity and energy that are wasted on politics, might be far better bestowed on physiological and social investigations and experiments, which though prohibited in England, receive due attention on the Continent. The extra personal freedom of Englishmen is mainly exercised in tyrannically preventing others from prosecuting such scientific and philosophical enquiries as have a direct and special bearing upon social improvement. And mark with what result. There can be no more important branch of knowledge than physiology; as Pope said—

"The proper study of mankind is man."

Yet in England the thorough practical study of it is almost interdicted, and if anyone there were known to thoroughly prosecute physiological study in its most important branches by experiment, he would assuredly be himself prosecuted under an Act which I shall quote as furnishing a striking illustration both of the doubtful advantage of British self-government, and of the way in which the dissemination of the most useful knowledge is prohibited. The Imperial Vivisection Act of 1876 was intended to prevent inhumanity. What between the intolerant action of the rabid suppressors of scientific knowledge and of the mild efforts of those who risked their positions by endeavoring to prevent mischief, the following is the result as described by Mr. Robert Lowe in the *Contemporary Review* for October last. The result of "the efforts of the two houses of Parliament to introduce *humanity* into our law as regards animals stands thus: It gives, 1st—Absolute liberty to torture all domestic animals *except by way* of scientific experiment. 2nd—Practical liberty for anyone who can afford to pay £5 to torture domestic animals, *except by way* of scientific experiment; and 3rd—No punishment for painful experiment *except by leave* of the Secretary of State."

Now if British self-government and political liberty, effectuate only such insanely abortive measures as this, what great advantage in legislation have we over our continental neighbours? *Theirs* can be no worse. And as regards *humanity*,—the Continental delegates at the last Prison Reform Conference were shocked at the barbarity of our best prison system as compared with their practice.

But the French and Germans are not neglectful in some other respects of the claims of others than criminals. They lay no embargo on scientific Experiments for the benefit of suffering humanity, and do not dream of prohibiting Vivisection or anything else, if done clearly for that beneficent purpose. Nearly all we know of embryology, has I believe been learnt from the Continent, because the necessary experiments were conventionally impossible in England, and would, if known to be attempted there, ruin the Experimenter. Other experiments are imperatively demanded by the needs of the people, which it would be difficult and dangerous to attempt in England—the boasted land of liberty;—but I shall venture to indicate them to-night.

It is very remarkable that in France where physiology is most systematically studied by means of Vivisection, the population principle is notoriously best understood and practically observed. Families there are consequently small, the population is stationary, poverty comparatively unknown, and savings therefore usual and considerable. To these circumstances is certainly due the unprecedented facility with which—though half paralysed by a disastrous war—France to the astonishment of Europe, collected and paid over to Prussia more than £200,000,000, and scarcely felt the loss. These are significant results of a wise recognition of the principle of population, that merit the serious attention of the world.

Now it is a heavy indictment against the politically free English press, that while for its profit it largely contributes to invest politics with an exaggerated and fictitious value, it also almost without exception panders to the morbid conventional taste which blindly prohibits

the study and publication of the most important knowledge; which brutally prefers to punish rather than prevent crimes that it mainly creates; and visits with pains and penalties the very class of men by whom the liberty of the press was really achieved; such as Richard Carlile, Holyoake, and Bradlaugh. In this the servile meanness and base ingratitude of the press cannot be too strongly reprehended. The press has consistently done its worst to suppress Mr. Bradlaugh, the leading champion of free speech and free printing. It rarely mentions him but to discredit and malign, or when his name cannot be excluded from law reports, &c. The London correspondent of the *Argus* furnished a mild example of what I mean on Saturday week, though it is honorable mention compared to the misrepresentation and slander that used generally to accompany his name. He was there styled "an intolerant and egotistic lecturer on many subjects, who manages to make himself very objectionable to all his opponents." Now Mr. Bradlaugh is emphatically the champion of tolerance in England, and is not at all more egotistic than his position necessitates. That he makes himself objectionable to his opponents is of course strictly true, for as a rule he clearly refutes them in argument, which few like to endure; but the obvious ill-natured implication of offensiveness in the manner of doing so, has I believe no further ground whatever. To the credit of the *Home News* I must say that it gives a very fair report of the trial; but the *European Mail* has not a word upon the subject, though there was then no more important item in the news.

So in Melbourne Mr. Bradlaugh has been nakedly represented lately as prosecuted for publishing an obscene book, which he denied was obscene; with holding the fact that from the first it was solely the RIGHT TO PRINT for which he contended; and that the particular book is one which he would not have published if the right to print it had not been cravenly surrendered by its former publisher to escape the legal consequences. He then magnanimously undertook the publication of a new edition of the proscribed book, simply to defend and test the right to print *any* such book on the population question for the benefit of suffering humanity; and his work has been as ably executed as it was wisely conceived. I think he deserves not only to have his whole expenses paid, but that the press should principally contribute to pay them. In fact, in one way he has made it do so, if the statement be true that 120,000 (£3000 worth) of the pamphlet have been sold since March. But he is richly entitled also to the thanks and blessings of the poor, specially, as well as generally of the human race. For it is the *people*—the *people*—who are destroyed for lack of this particular knowledge. The people are all therefore vitally interested in this matter. For what is the population question in a few words?

The principle of population, first expounded definitely by the Rev. Mr. Malthus eighty years ago, is—that as the rate of reproduction of the human race is enormously greater than that of the means of subsistence, prudential restriction upon human reproduction is the only way of proportioning it to the available means of subsistence, and of superseding the *natural* or *positive* checks upon it; namely—extreme poverty, starvation, disease and war. The constant operation of these positive checks is all that has prevented the human race from long since covering the whole earth shoulder to shoulder; the lowest estimate of the rate of increase being far more than sufficient to do so from a *single pair* in less than 1700 years. The wholesale slaughter of the innocents by these checks being insufficient to keep the population down to the level of the means of subsistence, it was formerly further reduced by the *universal* practice of infanticide. The deliberate universal practice; and if it be not universal now, I doubt if many exceptions beside *France* can be admitted. I suppose it is nowhere more illegal than in England; yet it was lately stated without challenge before the Dialectical Society of London, that 30,000 or one-fifth of the children born annually in London, are "put away"—that is murdered—*by their parents*.* Is it likely to be

* *National Reformer*, 10/6/77. p. 355.

less prevalent where the law is less stringent? We know that in savage countries and even in China, infanticide is recognised as the necessary means by which the adult population saves itself from starvation, and saves the bulk of its children from a more painful existence and protracted death; and if it is forbidden by our law, how much is gained by preserving the majority of the children who are not sacrificed in spite of it, for the life of misery, and often of crime, to which by the same means, their parents are often also reduced? Both, doubtless, err from ignorance, for

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

But I put it to you—whether that Society is excusable which actually interdicts the use of a rational preventative of the wholesale murders which it vainly prohibits and cruelly punishes? The savage knows no better, and yet relieves his society with far less expenditure of suffering.

Wise, observant, and humane men, have long sought diligently for the best means of obviating both the cruel preservation of infants for a miserable existence and protracted death, and also infanticide *before* as well as *after* birth; of *preventing*, instead of remedying the evil. Various mechanical means have been suggested by which men and women are enabled at least to use their rational judgment in producing no more children than they can support and educate properly; and notwithstanding the law, millions of tracts describing the means—have been circulated (thousands by me) for many years with that object. For the republication of one of these tracts "The Fruits of Philosophy" by Dr. Knowlton, Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant have just been sentenced to six months' imprisonment, and to pay a fine of £200 each, besides the enormous costs of defending the case. Remembering, however, that though the Jury found that the book was calculated to deprave public morals, it entirely exonerated the defendants from evil intention; that the Lord Chief Justice said that the prosecution was "most ill-advised," and that there was "nothing whatever in the book to excite the passions," but that if the jury thought the book calculated to debase public morals, he must direct it to find a verdict of guilty, whatever might have been the intention of the publishers; that the defendants were discharged for a week, and that the Chief Justice then said, in passing sentence, that they might have been discharged on their own recognisances had they not in the interim pushed the sale of the book; but that upon the defendants promising to stop the sale, they were again discharged; and lastly that the proceedings have amply disclosed how respectably and extensively the defendants were supported by public sympathy; remembering all these circumstances I cannot believe that the penalties will be inflicted at all, whatever may be the decision upon the writ of error.

But whatever the result to Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, their prosecution cannot fail to do immense public good. I think that nothing could have happened better calculated to secure the free and open discussion in the future of this most important of all social subjects, and to open the door to the ventilation of others in their turn. To have the case argued exhaustively in open court was a great point; but it was still better to see the list of subscriptions published weekly in the *National Reformer* (£1050 odd to the 12th of Aug. made up of threepennys, sixpences, and up to five guineas—from many thousands of all classes) and the published expressions of encouragement and sympathy from many leading men including Professor Bayne and General Garibaldi; this is of more significance than even the discussion of the question; for it proves that public opinion is already largely modified on the subject, and therefore prepared for modification on other social subjects not yet touched. For what is called *morality* is only the *present public opinion* as to what acts are proper or not; that public opinion is modifiable;—and the bringing of all human actions and customs to the one test of reason and utility as this one has been brought, is the one point to be attained to ensure their modification. Prostitution, marriage, the slavery of women and of the human mind, and the treatment of

crime, religion, lunacy and pauperism, all demand to be brought to the same tribunal, and *shall* be brought to it—all in good; time and Charles Bradlaugh has done more than any other man unless perhaps Voltaire, and Mrs. Besant more than other woman to bring about this transcendent good. Their action in this matter was simply magnificent.

The principle of population as expounded by Malthus, is simply that population naturally tends to increase enormously faster than the means of subsistence can be produced. This is demonstrable by facts as well as by figures, and Malthus considerably understated his case for the sake of giving it arithmetical definiteness. He has for this reason, I think, failed to secure general recognition of the great principle, whereas a simpler and more convincing way of bringing it home to the popular comprehension is to quote familiar cases, and point out how they exemplify the general law. Population really increases much faster than Malthus assumes—that is, it doubles in less than 25 years. It has been known to double in much less time, in spite of the positive checks which always operate; and the means of subsistence can be only arbitrarily estimated as conforming to any particular ratio of increase; therefore the precise ratios adopted by Malthus, though much understated, are frequently distrusted by many who are wholly unable to invalidate them. It is also foolishly assumed by objectors (on the same principle as that on which the ostrich hides its head in the sand instead of trying to escape from its pursuers) that because they do not happen to feel inconveniently the pressure of population, therefore there is none to be felt by others. It is even alleged that consideration of the subject may be safely postponed for a few centuries till the whole earth is populated. Whereas the pressure is present and constant, and as perceptible now as it ever will be to those who survive. It does not affect those who can earn enough to support themselves easily, or who have pecuniary or other advantages. It is felt by the very poor, the vicious, the diseased, and, lastly, the exterminated, who are silent. It is as heavy upon any man in Melbourne if he have ten children, and no food for them, as by anyone in the same position in London or China. It has pressed and is now pressing millions out of existence in a peculiarly cruel manner, and causes nearly the whole of the poverty, crime, disease, and misery, under which humanity groans. Surely it is evident to the meanest comprehension, that in any house where there is only one man, if he have no food, *there* the population is in advance of the means of subsistence. How much more when he has a wife and children more or less? Do not *they* feel the pressure? What benefit is it to them if butchers and bakers live on either hand, if they have no money to buy? And how often is that the case from an interminable variety of causes? It is invariably the case, more or less, wherever population concentrates in large masses, which is the inevitable condition of civilisation. There is doubtless plenty of room in the country, and it may be asked, and is asked, why are men so stupid as to starve in towns when that is the case? Obviously because it is precisely those who are starving who cannot move. There is ample room in America, Africa, and Australia, for all the poor of Britain a thousand times over; but how are they to get there? The fact that they are starving is a pretty sure indication that they have, more or less, large families, which prevent their moving. The wealthy can, but do not feel it incumbent upon them to go abroad. The poor cannot, however much they may desire to do so. But the voices of those who feel the pressure, are not heard. They are all either dead or dying. Consider that the rate of wages is determined necessarily by competition of single persons, and the demand for their labor, not by the needs and responsibilities of the laborer. If employers can get single men at £3 per week, is it likely that they will pay £15 or £20 to a man who has been reckless enough to have ten or twelve children? A single man may save one or even two pounds of the three, but what can a man save with ten children? With one pair of arms he has twelve mouths to feed, twelve backs to clothe, and ten heads to educate. *He* feels the pressure of population, and so do *they*, who

ever else may not. Even if they are clothed and fed they must lack education, and become less fitted than their father to compete for wages, and more fitted for the gaol if they escape the cemetery. And this is where society feels it, and should recognise it, and discuss the question of relieving the individual from the pressure which is demoralising others, as well as destroying him. Generally the most of the ten children are squeezed out of the way by the others. Often the man's back is broken by their weight, while only half rearing those who have the better fortune to die early. And the mother! Poor thing! Her back is probably broken first, to say nothing of her health and her heart. In fact, the unfortunate mother is too often thus destroyed for lack of this knowledge *without any poverty at all*, and all women are therefore in urgent need of salvation from this evil.

Now, I ask, would it not be far better for all parties, if some of those ten or twelve children had not been born? Two—or perhaps three, with extra hard work and economy, might be made useful, happy members of society, without killing their parents and brothers and sisters by protracted misery and starvation. The children of the poor die three times as fast as those of the rich (Dr. Drysdale, see *Home News*), and they neither live nor die for nothing. Respecting the 30,000 children that are annually destroyed in London by their parents; whether is it better or more humane to starve them miserably by inches in five years or so,—to “*put them away*” quietly as is now done,—or, to PREVENT their miserable existence? Can any humane or rational person hesitate as to the preferable alternative? Surely not. But how prevent it? This is the question for solution. The great problem of the age. Here Mr. Malthus steps in as the real saviour of humanity, for he first placed the principle of population before the world. But his apostles, who have really brought the true saving gospel to the poor of England, are James Mill, Richard Carlile, James Watson, Edward Truelove, Robt. Dale Owen, the author of the “*Elements of Social Science*,” and last, not least, Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant. I know not who in France deserves equal credit with the Marquis Condorcet, Raciborski, and Garnier.

Mr. Malthus only recommended the postponement of marriage till 30 years of age or upwards, until means to support a family have been accumulated, without knowing of how many the family might consist. But it is not in human nature to postpone marriage thus, particularly when statistics prove (Dr. Drysdale says in *National Reformer*, 10th June) that to delay it after 21 is to shorten life by six years! And remember that the postponement of marriage means prostitution, and that stringent measures to suppress prostitution only multiply the number of illegitimate births!

Now all children come unbidden, and come simply to kill others by over-crowding, or to be killed themselves. For even those comfortably born increase the exterminating pressure upon those who are not. This is an indisputable fact. It is also a fact, that not only is the best method of obviating this wholesale and peculiarly cruel kind of infanticide yet doubtful or unknown, but discussion of the subject is prohibited, and experiments to ascertain the best means are punishable by law. But the discussion can no longer be prevented. The whole subject must be discussed, and the experiments will soon be imperatively demanded. It is infamous to human nature, or rather inhuman nature, that no efforts should be made to prevent this barbarous but quite preventable slaughter of the innocents.

The amount of intellect hired at an enormous expense to persecute Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant for recommending its prevention, would suffice, if better directed, to go far towards solving the question. Being obviously the most important subject of the day, it should be discussed daily; as it is of supreme importance to the poor, it should be discussed most by the poor; as the pressure is heaviest upon women, it should be discussed particularly by women; as it is of vast importance to all, it should be freely discussed by all; and I hold that the State should institute skilled experiments, which should be continued and extended until successful, to ascertain the best and most certain method of avoiding the production of children, unless at the dictate of the de-

liberate rational judgment, and that alone.

The present exaggerated value which is placed upon human life is only the mischievous survival of a feeling proper and necessary when life was not plentiful, and when every one was of importance to the State. Now that human life is excessively redundant,—now that—so to speak—the market is glutted with it, its intrinsic value must therefore, like that of anything else—over-produced, and at a discount,—be proportionately less; and though society should certainly not relax the security which it maintains for lives which are clearly valuable, it should certainly not force those to be born, or to live, whose lives must be painful to themselves, and hurtful or destructive to others. The attempt at suicide is proof of uselessness; and the stupidity of endeavouring to prevent it, by punishing for not succeeding in it, is obvious. Is it not equally stupid to punish for infanticide—which so far relieves the pressure of population, and is therefore so far beneficial to society? And ought we not rather to reprobate and punish for adding recklessly to the excessive population, and its demoralising and destructive pressure?

How “*my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge!*” this particular knowledge! What blind folly to assert that if this knowledge were common, a bad use *might* be made of it by some persons! Now, who are those persons? Certainly not those who neither need nor desire, and therefore would not use—this particular knowledge. They must then be those who, for want of it, do much worse now than they might do with it, and certainly cannot do worse with it than they do without it. But the evil that they do, would by the use of such knowledge be restricted to themselves; and its disastrous and demoralising consequences would—by the prevention of the perpetuation of their evil kind, be saved to society largely and to posterity entirely. If we cannot make them moral, we can and ought at least to prevent them from being mischievous. It would be as reasonable to prohibit to all the use of medicine, money, knives and matches, because some persons might misuse them. But knowledge is different from all these things, in that the use of it is always good. If a bad use of knowledge could possibly be made, there can be but one reason? Simply that the knowledge is inadequate, and that more is necessary. Knowledge makes good people better—not worse; and is the only thing competent to make bad people good. It is the defect of knowledge alone that is the universal evil.

But how? my over-virtuous Society for the Suppression of Vice—forsooth, and other irrational persecutors of those who would prevent the greatest of all the evils that afflict humanity? Are you your brother's or your sister's keeper? Have you thought—can you not see, that if you take upon yourselves to withhold this knowledge from your now erring sisters and brothers, you actually assume to yourselves—and undertake—the grave moral responsibility for their consequent errors and crimes? for their infanticide, their prostitution, their thefts, their murders; which you now do nothing to prevent, but those who would prevent them, you do much to hinder! I say the voice of their innocent blood cries against you from the ground! The only way in which you can possibly vindicate your particular responsibility in this matter, is by helping those who want it—to the all-important saving knowledge by every means in your power. Give them that knowledge, and with it, you lay upon THEMSELVES the proper responsibility for their own errors; but you cannot otherwise shift it from your guilty shoulders! Your Vice Society is a Vicious Society. A vice creating and vice perpetuating Society.

The Free Discussion Society sent £8 by the September mail to the Bradlaugh and Besant Defence Fund, and I sincerely wish that I could send £100 more. I trust that all their expenses will be freely paid; for it is for the suffering human race, and its rescue from cruel poverty, that they have nobly worked and suffer.

The *Otago Daily Times*, of October 11th, gives a report of a well attended complimentary *soiree*, given to Mr Charles Bright at the conclusion of a long series of lectures on Spiritualism and Free Thought at Dunedin. Mr. Bright was leaving for Auckland and Sydney on a lecturing tour, but it was expected he would return and resume his lectures at Dunedin in a few months.

MATERIALIZATIONS, OR FORM MANIFESTATIONS.

By L. E. HARCUS.

ONE of the most curious things about Spiritualism, and yet one of the most convincing, is, the innumerable methods that our friends who have experienced the change called death, have adopted of communicating with us who yet remain upon the earth plane. From the first rappings at Hydesville to the wonderful results of spirit photography, there exists a wide field which is filled up in almost every imaginable manner. One of the most interesting fields of investigation for the scientist, or indeed for everyone who has a desire for knowledge of spiritualism, is to be found in the phenomena which for many years have been known as materialisations, but to which the term Form manifestations—a better name, it appears to me in every respect—has recently been applied. I feel convinced that no one who has read of the marvellous results obtained by Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., in his investigation of this subject, through the mediumship of Miss Florence Cook, can fail to see at once that the fact of materialisation is undeniable. The only question is, how are the results obtained? The usual answer to such an enquiry is that they are the result of fraud by the medium, or of collusion on the part of some one or more of the sitters at the circle. This theory is however, untenable, and is never advanced by those who have had any fair opportunities for witnessing the phenomena. Mr. Crookes himself has applied the most stringent tests, and has had the most conclusive proofs of the genuineness of the phenomena. This, all must admit who know anything about his experiments with Katie King.

I may perhaps be able to add a little upon this subject to the knowledge of Australian Spiritualists, as I have recently returned to this colony from England. During my stay in the old country, I spent some six months in Newcastle-on-Tyne, where I had full opportunities of witnessing the magnificent form manifestations lately seen there, through the mediumship of Miss Annie Fairlamb. An account of some of these may be interesting. The seances were held in the rooms of the Psychological Society, which by the way are immediately over rooms occupied by an old lady who has a perfect horror of Spiritualism, and who is terribly afraid of "ghosts." The room has been frequently examined in order to detect means of trickery, but without success, because there are no trap-doors, false walls or anything of that kind; I think I am safe in saying that every one who has visited the rooms in Weir's Court, is convinced that the manifestations there witnessed originated in the rooms, and have nothing to do with outside agencies in the flesh; that is they are convinced that the phenomena presented are genuine, whether they are of spiritual origin or not. The character of these seances at Newcastle may best be seen by a description.

In the first place it is necessary to remark that while every opportunity is given to visitors to impose tests, it is always the majority who rules. Thus if two or more visitors propose tests, the description of both or all is explained, and then it is resolved which shall be imposed. I may say that I never knew any dissatisfaction expressed by anyone after the seances were over. The controls of Miss Fairlamb were always willing that their medium should be tested in any honorable way; but on their part they demanded—with perfect justice—that the sitters should strictly keep the conditions, which were simply that they should join hands and not loose them or touch any form that might appear without permission. The cabinet is formed of green baize curtains suspended from the ceiling and falling over a semi-circular piece of iron fixed to the wall. The circle being formed, the medium as a rule, took her place in the cabinet, being tied, sealed or not, according to circumstances. The proceedings usually commenced by singing a hymn, generally "The Sweet bye-bye," during which the medium would be controlled by "Cissy" a little Indian girl, about twelve or thirteen years of age. She would keep us in pleasant conversation for about half-an-hour, while "George" or "Geordie," another

control was "gathering the power" for the materialisation. As soon as he was ready Cissy would bid us good-bye, and leaving the medium would put her into a deep trance. Another hymn would follow, when the curtains would open, and we would see a form come out; usually that of Cissy, who is about three feet and a half high, with a dark brown skin, but clothed in garments of surpassing purity. Cissy walks about the room ringing bells, carrying heavy weights, dancing, and even eating. She has a warm place in her heart for Good Templars, and generally asks them if they have the password. I have frequently had hold of her, and have kissed her on several occasions. After a time she retires, and then comes the beautiful form of "Minnie," apparently a young lady of about eighteen or twenty years of age, with most graceful movements. Minnie has a beautiful head of hair, and she occasionally favours visitors to the seances with a small piece cut off before their eyes. I have a lock in my possession, which I have compared with the hair of the medium. It is entirely different both in colour and texture, being darker and finer. Then we have visits from "George" and "Sam," the latter a strong powerful man with distinctly masculine limbs, "Sam" on earth life was, I believe, a sailor, and I have seen him dance the sailor's hornpipe admirably. "George" was at the time a member of "Billy Purvis's" show company, which will be recollected by all Novo Castrians, who may read this paper.

The above is the usual order of proceedings, but I have seen great variations. I have seen Minnie materialise before my face six feet away from the medium, and separated from her by a thick baize curtain; I have seen the materialised forms walk out of an empty cabinet, the medium sitting in the middle of the circle; and I have seen Cissy and Miss Fairlamb walking about together; besides a lot more that I have neither space nor time to describe here. Everything was genuine and above board—the light good and the phenomena absolutely convincing.

Palm Place, Hackney,
South Australia.

CELEBRATION OF A SILVER WEDDING, AND A SEANCE AT CASTLEMAINE.

On the Thursday evening of 27th September, at the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Paton, several friends met at their house to celebrate their Silver Wedding, and a most enjoyable and pleasant evening was spent by those who were present. During the evening, it was proposed we should take advantage of the extraordinary mediumistic power of our hostess, and have an *impromptu seance*. We soon formed a circle, and had not long to sit before we had some beautiful flowers thrown on the table. A very short space of time elapsed after the light had been extinguished, when down came a shower of apples, which, upon being counted, numbered no less than twenty-one. The light was again put out, and at the very moment it was extinguished, two more apples dropped, as if they had been suspended over the table. One could almost imagine our spirit friends held the symbolical cornucopia, or horn of plenty, over the table, and were emptying the contents out of compliment to our hostess. After sitting a little time longer, having no fire in the room, some of the sitters felt rather chilly, and a fire was made. But, in a short time, we began to feel the heat, and one of those present remarked that we could not expect any more manifestations with the strong light the fire made, when some one expressed a wish the spirits would bring in some water to quench it. In a minute or so a slight noise, under the table, attracted the attention of those sitting, and, lo! behold! underneath the table was a large kettleful of water. Now, this most wonderful manifestation happened in the bright fire-light, and it was the last we got, for we then broke up the circle, and spent the rest of the evening in pleasant converse. I may also mention we drank the health of the Sister of our Medium, who would also be celebrating the same event, her own silver wedding, in Philadelphia, U.S. The two sisters are mediums, and developed much about the same time at the opposite ends of the world.

AN INTERESTING PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT.

BY AMELIA CORNER.

I HAVE great pleasure in authenticating the circumstance of my daughter's writing my thoughts, alluded to in your article on "The Relationship between Mesmerism and Spiritualism," in the last number of *The Spiritualist*.

The *modus operandi* is simply this:—I ask a friend who may be present, but not sitting with us at the table, to write a few words on a piece of paper and give them to me privately, so that my daughter may not see them. I then place my fingers on her hand, and ask the spirits to read my thoughts (I, in the meantime, reading the communication on the paper), and write them through my daughter's hand.

This they invariably do, although she has no knowledge of what she is writing, and does not know until we tell her. I have tried placing my fingers on various parts of her arm, but the power gets weaker the farther they are removed from her hand; still the communication has been given in her writing when my hand has been placed on her shoulder.

I do not believe that I have any mesmeric influence over my daughter, but that I merely give her that physical power for her writing of which she is deficient.

At our seance this afternoon I read your paragraph beforementioned to our spirit friends, asking for their explanation. The following was written through my daughter's hand in reply, and I believe it to be a pure and truthful explanation of the phenomenon. She was not aware of what she had written until it was read to her afterwards:—

"We are not in the habit of answering paragraphs in newspapers, but will make an exception in this case. We do not see how any one can mistake the influence which controls your daughter's hand. When you ask us to write your thoughts, we simply do it in the way you would read from a book. Your daughter is a passive instrument in the matter for the time being, we using her hand as a machine, she not knowing the purport of our writing. This machine, or hand, is not sufficient without a portion of vitality from yourself."

I may further state that I have had proofs, apart from my daughter's mediumship, of spirits reading my thoughts and immediately carrying out my wishes.

3 St. Thomas's-square, Hackney,
June 24th, 1877.

The Spiritualist.

HYDRO-MAGNETIC VISIONS.

A REVIEW BY C. W. BOHNER, M.D., HAMILTON.

THE extraordinary facilities of mental and physical communication and intercourse, gradually brought about in modern times between the inhabitants of the most distant regions of the globe by a comprehensive and almost perfect system of navigation, telegraphy and complete postal arrangements, appear to the philosophical observer and student of contemporary history scarcely less wonderful than the lately re-discovered method of communicating with the inhabitants not only of the planets of our solar system, but also those of the spiritual spheres. An interesting instance, illustrative of the above observation, was furnished to me only a few days ago in a pamphlet, sent to me for perusal by my friend and brother, Mr. W. H. Terry, of Melbourne. The accomplished writer of this brochure is the celebrated Baroness Adelpa de Vay, a lady compatriot of mine, whom it is not at all impossible or improbable I have met more than twenty years ago in the streets and theatres of Vienna, only to meet her again, this time spiritually, at the antipodes. Length of distance, both spiritual and temporal, difference of nationality and language, difference of political institutions, habits, customs and interests, which at one time formed almost insurmountable barriers to the mutual approximation of the members of our race, act no longer as arduous difficulties and impediments to a rapid exchange of ideas between the various branches of the human family all over the world. There can be little doubt that these modern facilities of intercourse, principally

based upon the antecedent high development of the physical sciences, especially magnetism, electricity, chemistry, &c., &c., were also indirectly the means of bringing about and facilitating a proper understanding and appreciation of the most glorious of all the discoveries of the nineteenth century, viz., celestial telegraphy, and daily postal intercourse with the spirits of the spheres. Without the previous aid of these semi-spiritual sciences it would have been almost impossible, even for the best minds (except minds endowed with the intuitive faculties of a Plato), to comprehend the very A, B, C of modern Spiritualism; for even now eminent men of science, and renowned scholars seem to be unable, with all these scientific aids and powerful levers at their disposal, to grasp and realise the importance of the far-reaching facts of the spiritual science and philosophy.

We must now, though very reluctantly, take leave of these interesting preliminary reflections, which were called up by the above mentioned happy exchange of inter-polar currents of intellectual and spiritual companionship, and proceed to our self-imposed task, a real labour of love, of bringing under the notice of your readers a host of interesting facts, contained in a little work by the distinguished medium in question, the title of which, "Visionen in Wassergläse," I have taken the liberty of translating somewhat liberally as "Hydro-magnetic Visions." Every student of the absorbing literature of modern Spiritualism must be familiar with a highly interesting and well-written book, published some four years ago in Paris by the famous hydro-magnetic medium, M^{me}. Antoinette Bourdin, under the title of "La Mediumité au verre d'eau," or "Mediumship by means of a glass of water." In the preface to that work, the spirit of which is almost identical with that of the pamphlet now under consideration, Madame Bourdin, whose alleged control and guardian spirit is Goethe, states that the glass of water is used only as a point of concentration upon which the medium places her foot, as upon a spring-board to leap, so to speak, across the barrier of the flesh; that in the glass itself nothing is produced, except the magnetic action and influence which the spirits project into it to assist the medium in the enfranchisement of her spirit from the gross carnal bonds of her physical organism. Whilst in this state the medium is semi-conscious, but the seeing of things spiritual predominates over the material sight; in fact, in this phenomenon we have to deal with what is popularly designated as "second sight" (double vue), and the spirits of both worlds appear to Madame Bourdin's astonished gaze; she lives in two worlds simultaneously; she can converse, see and hear, in two directions at once; she does not sleep, on the contrary, it seems to her as if her intellectual faculties were quickened, and far more acute than in her normal condition; indeed, her state at this time resembles more the state of an anticipated resurrection from death than anything else we could compare it to.

The explanation of the visions of Adelpa de Vay, as given by her own controls, is as follows:—"The faculty of the seer is as old as man himself, and traces of it are found among all the nations of antiquity, among many mediums of our time, and in all strata of human society. This faculty, however, has not yet been scientifically investigated and studied. The manner of spiritual sight differs in the different mediums. Some mediums see the spiritual tableaux in space, others see them in the flames of the fire, some in the water, others in crystals and globes, &c. In order to be able to see these spiritual things, it is necessary to fetter the human mind, and concentrate it upon some external object (probably with a view of fatiguing or altogether extinguishing the function of the physical apparatus of sight, which may easily be accomplished by fixedly gazing upon a shining or brilliant surface, which dazzles the eye); the brain and eye must be completely absorbed, the mind must retire into the innermost chambers of its spiritual laboratory, and devote itself to the exclusive employment of the internal senses. A high degree of simultaneous self-consciousness of the medium is productive of the clearest, most positive, and most reliable visions (Adelpa de Vay seems to differ in this respect from Madame Bourdin.) Every human being possesses the requisite conditions for the development of this gift, which we may mention, *en passant*, is perfectly independent from the will of the medium, for it is the will of the spirits which is at work in the preparation and exhibition of the pictures seen, and not that of the medium, which latter is generally unable to see what it would most desire to see. We spirits produce these fluidic panoramas on the principle of the mirror (*Fata Morgana*?) by means of ærial and luminous impressions and reflexes. When your art of photography has reached its perfection, the seeing medium will be able to reproduce these fluidic images photographically with the aid of magnifying glasses and mirrors."

I shall now proceed to give the readers of the *Harbinger of Light* a succinct idea of the contents of the brochure itself. It is divided into two parts, the first of which consists of a detailed account of the visions proper of the medium. The visions, eighty-eight in number, are again subdivided into (1) the symbolical and other images seen, (2) their explanation and purport given by the controls, and (3) their fulfilment in the words of the author. These visions deal with a variety of subjects of every day life; the most interesting ones are like those to be found in Denton's "The Soul of Things," and belong to the comprehensive department of psychometrical science, which at no very distant date will supersede much of our present analytical chemistry and celestial physics. In order to give the reader a correct idea of the nature of these visions I shall give an illustrative example. *Fifty-eighth Vision*, 23rd July, 1874: "On this day I had a

most peculiar vision, which I intend transcribing here, as it forms, according to my opinion, a highly interesting study. A richly attired negro presents himself, a white turban decorates his head. A 'Christus Head' appears in a triangular frame of gold. A beautiful peacock comes next. Strange looking cloudy spirits, dressed in long flowing robes, enter now upon the visionary stage. Suddenly a storm arises, the water in the glass becomes troubled and agitated. Indiarubber galoshes. A number of church bells."

"*Explanation*: The negro and the 'Christus Head' (the controls of the medium are now speaking) indicate a great kingdom in the interior of Africa, of which we intended to give you an account long ago. This vast kingdom lies far beyond the salt lakes, and is inhabited by original Christians. This country is well cultivated, shut in on all sides by impenetrable forests, swamps, and high mountain chains, and is moreover guarded against intruders by a long string of lakes. At a period not very distant from the present time people will discover this country without the slightest doubt; its inhabitants, however, possess no knowledge whatever of the rest of the world. This tribe of negroes are original Christians, as we have already mentioned, the religion of Christ having been transplanted there by an apostle, and exists there now in its primitive purity. The cloudy spirits signify plenty of rain and storms. The galoshes indicate a journey which you shortly intend making; the church bells presage a conflagration in a town well-known to you."

"*Fulfillment*: Concerning my vision about the interior of Africa, I entreat those mediums who have received similar communications on the same subject (my guide Buddha tells me there are such mediums) to compare their communications with mine. Shortly after the date of this vision I read in the papers of great floods, storms, earthquakes, as also of a great fire in Kaschan. Our journey occurred in September, 1874."

Here ends the account of this certainly very strange vision, the strangest thing in it being the absolute silence of the spirit guides as to the longitude and latitude of this *terra incognita* of original Christians, from all appearances a real happy valley *a la* Rasselas. What a magnificent test it would have been had the spirits told us that this vast kingdom was situated, say 5° N.L. and 20° E.L., so that some future Livingstone, Stanley or Cameron could have verified the statement afterwards by its actual discovery. A successful hit like this would impress our somewhat hard-headed men of science far more than whole volumes of accounts and records of the most wonderful materialisation—séances. Why do we not get such tests as these? Again, it is against all historical analogy to expect that, in a world of ceaseless changes like ours, any religious sect should have been able to preserve its original doctrines in a perfect state of unaltered purity for nearly two thousand years, as these African negroes are supposed to have done. The Jews themselves, the most stiff-necked and tenacious of all races of men, would thus be surpassed by this last chosen sable race. The guides of our medium evidently look upon Christianity as a finality, and seem to regard it, in harmony with many pious spirits in our material sphere, as the *non plus ultra* of all possible religions, which it is impossible either to supersede or improve upon. Unfortunately for ourselves we are unable to tell what ancient or original Christianity was, having so inadequate data to go upon, but if modern Christianity is a criterion to go by, that is bad enough, God knows, to make good men look forward for something better in lieu of it. I, for one, would not object to be converted to original christianity even by negroes, provided their Christianity were the genuine article, the lost ring of Bozaccio's legend, and not a counterfeit. And then again, what is the name of the apostle who inoculated these highly favored negroes with the Divine blood of Christ? Was Phillip their missionary? If so, why not say so, if the spirits can prove it by satisfactory evidence? But enough of such doubtings and questionings for the present; for after all it is quite possible that the ways of the spirits of Adema de Vay are not like our ways; but nevertheless we cannot refrain from giving expression to our opinions and convictions, and do it on the recognised principle of trying all things and sticking to the best.

We come now to the second part of the pamphlet, which treats principally about the nature and powers of the elementary spirits, the cautious study of which is highly recommended to our men of science by the author, as careful researches in this direction are bound to lead to important discoveries, especially in physics, astronomy, meteorology, hygiene, spirit-photography and materialisation, &c. These elementary spirits are divided into four classes, namely—spirits of the light, spirits of the air, spirits of the water, and spirits of the earth. It would carry us too far, however, to enter here into a detailed account of all the various properties and singular characteristics of this legion of elementary spirits, and it must suffice to state in general terms that the doctrines laid down in this pamphlet with respect to the "*elementaries*" are analogous to those promulgated by French and German occultists and students of magic, and latterly also advocated by the American school of theosophists, under the leadership of Colonel Olcott. It is unnecessary, perhaps, to tell your readers that Adema de Vay is one of the most distinguished disciples of the late Allen Kardec, and as such belongs to that able school of reincarnationists whose doctrines still continue to be so unpalatable and indigestible to the ordinary common-sense English Spiritualists. But have we not been told that "there was war in heaven?"—Why, then, should we be astonished about the war of opinions of the terrestrial spirits? Those who are advanced enough to know that the progress of the human race is principally based upon the proper working out of violent contrasts, will be content with the results at present attained, and work for higher ones with the progressive ardour of 'Excelsior.' In the meantime, then, let us agree to differ until we are in possession of fuller and more positive knowledge. And now, I say to my sister in spirit,

ADDIO, MIA CARA COMPATRIOTA.

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